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America's Avid Appetites

AVIGOROUSLY pressed assault on American Sunday observance which is now under way in the press and in the motion picture theaters makes industrious use of the term "Blue Laws." Every device of the satirical writer and the comic cartoonist has been utilized to create a condition of mob hysteria on the subject. There are assumedly intelligent people who will tell you that a strong organization of fanatical and puritanical reformers are determined on imposing "their seventeenth century notions" on the modern people of free America.

Under the threatened enactment by Congress of these "blue laws," we are told everybody will be compelled to go to church on Sunday on penalty of fine and imprisonment. Automobiling is to be banned. Pleasant country walks and the innocent recreations in the green places of our city parks, or trips to the woods and the seashore, are to be forbidden. No more Sunday newspapers or comforting after-dinner pipe or cigar! First thing we know a man's kissing his wife on Sunday will become a punishable offense! This is the sort of preposterous guff ladled out to the public in the movie films and the newspapers without measure.

Discrimination is almost as rare as a white black-bird. The very blackness of the smoke-screen barrage sent up in this publicity stunt should have made it suspect in the minds of intelligent people. And a little honest inquiry shows that the whole attack is based from first to last on mendacity. So outrageously audacious, indeed, is this mendacity that it is an insult to public intelligence to assume that any thinking man would be fooled by it. Apparently the anti-rest-day propagandists count on lack of exactly such intelligence.

What are the facts? Simply that certain commercial associations in the United States, with utter disregard for everything but their own pockets, have set out to destroy the American Sabbath to capture an extra day in the week for vampire films and prize fights, incidentally seeking to discredit all laws against bootleggers and gamblers and indecent exhibitions.

As a smoke-screen for their actual objects, these Avid Appetites obtained wide publicity for the statement that a "National Sunday Law," designed to restore the Puritan "blue laws" in all their archaic asceticism, was pending in Congress and was backed by various reform organizations.

The fact is that the only law concerning Sunday observance before Congress is a bill designed to bring the city of Washington into line with 47 of our states to protect the American Sabbath against invasion by commercialized amusements in the national capital. It is a local measure backed by local interests and has been pending for 42 years. It has only local scope and has no national significance. Reform organizations of national scope promised to support it on general principles. But it is not denial but protection of every man's right to Sunday rest that is the aim of these reformers.

Every commonwealth in the Union, except California and the District of Columbia, have Sunday laws which have been revised or affirmed since the Civil War. The only actual Sunday issue is as to whether or not these laws should be enforced; whether the selfish interests opposed to them should be allowed to promote law-breaking. Lovers of their country are called on to bar the efforts of venal interests to obtain exemptions in these laws that would permit money-making exhibitions, including prize fights, liquor selling,

gambling and unnecessary business on Sunday. In many states Sunday movies are already illegal, as are other forms of money-making on the Sabbath. They have no more right than any other business to infringe on the weekly rest day guaranteed to the people by their own laws. In fact the claim of the movie men to special treatment is made the more insolent by the fact that it has been publicly admitted recently by officers of a dozen leading motion picture producing companies that many of their films are unfit for public exhibition on any day.

The phrase which has been made to do duty in bamboozling the American public originated in the title of a literary hoax perpetrated by an exiled traitor to the American cause during the Revolution. "The Connecticut Blue Laws" were invented by him and published in London to satirize and belittle the character of the patriots battling for American independence. The "invention" of the "National Sunday Law" of 1920 fittingly rests on the earlier "invention" of 1777. Propaganda is the mother of "many inventions."

This attack on the American Sabbath by foreigners enjoying our hospitality is palpably un-American. It is, moreover, an attempt to mock and deride the laws of the land and the sound principles of American jurisprudence, as enunciated in a decision of the United States Supreme Court. That tribunal in 1886 distinctly declared:

"Laws setting aside Sunday as a day of rest are upheld, not from any right of the government to legislate for the promotion of religious observances, but from its right to protect all people from the physical and moral debasement which comes from uninterrupted labor. Such laws have always been deemed beneficent and merciful laws, especially to the poor and dependent, to the laborers in our factories and workshops and in the heated rooms of our cities; and their validity has been sustained by the highest courts of the states."

No true American has any community of interest with the un-American interests now seeking to fool the people of this country by promoted falsehoods. That they may profiteer, they are attacking an eminently American institution, an institution which Theodore Roosevelt rightly said is "essential to mankind and demanded by civilization."

A Prince's Pleasures

THERE is something immensely suggestive in the opinions expressed by Albert, Prince of Monaco, on his recent arrival in New York. He has come to America, he says, to have some fun. When the American or British pleasure seeker wishes to go the limit in the line of what is called "the gay life," he hies him to Monaco. To the natural beauty of this most charming of Europe's garden spots, the art of the architect and the landscape gardener has been made to contribute by recklessly lavish expenditure. Its situation on the Mediterranean with its meeting of sea and mountain gives the place an atmosphere as exhilarating as champagne. It is a city perpetually en fete. A haven of delight to the sensuous, Monaco is forever gay and joyous with flowers, music and all the brilliant-colored pagantry of fashion's dress parade.

And the very core of this Principality of Pleasure is the magnificent temple at Monte Carlo in which devotees of the Goddess Chance gather from the ends of the earth to know the thrills of alternate elation and despair at the gambling table.

But the reigning sovereign of Monaco, lord of all its gardens and pleasure palaces, seeks his amusements elsewhere and otherwise. He is the world's foremost authority in oceanography. He comes to us now to deliver an address on his oceanic researches before the National Academy of Sciences at Washington. Then he will receive the Agassiz medal from Harvard and tour the country telling our learned bodies and students of his discoveries concerning the depths and the currents of the seven seas. He is also an authority in paleontology and will expound to us interesting things he has discovered about fossil organisms. Although 71 years old, he rises at six every morning to devote himself to laborious research and study and retires late, "even so finding the days all too short to accomplish all he wishes to accomplish."

This is his idea of fun, and he seems to thrive on it. He also enjoys music and the theater in moderation. The entire revenue of his principality is derived from the rental paid by the concessionaire of the gambling casino. It enables him to relieve his subjects from all taxation and to provide on a liberal scale for their welfare and enjoyment. The gambler pays all the bills. Well, it takes all sorts of people to make a world and this world is certainly one of queer contrasts and contradictions.

"Double Jointed"

"ANOTHER Dreyfus case," shouts Senator Calder in connection with his demand that the Department of Justice institute a special inquiry into the facts in the case of Captain Robert Rosenbluth, formerly of the Engineers, accused of the murder of his superior officer, Major Cronkhite, at Camp Lewis, near Tacoma, in 1918.

In this gratuitous attempt to link the name of Rosenbluth with that of Dreyfus, the New York Senator is evincing suspicious subserviency to the Kehillah and a marked susceptibility to the influence of the strongly Jewish constituency of his home district in the Borough of Brooklyn.

It will be recalled that—thanks largely to the eloquent and forceful advocacy of a Gentile, Emile Zola—the innocence of Captain Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French Army, was vindicated, and his restoration to freedom and rank obtained some time after he had been convicted of the treasonable communication of French military plans to Germany.

At the time, and ever since, the Jews have exerted themselves to make capital of the case. It has been depicted at frequently recurring intervals for a generation past as typical of the "wrongs inflicted on the Jewish race" through the alleged prevalence among Christians of "anti-Semitic" hatred. Let it be said for Dreyfus himself that he was a very decent fellow, averse to posing as a martyr to racial prejudice and probably greatly annoyed by the constant and continuing exploitation of his sufferings on the part of his co-racials. It seems likely that he well understood that he was the victim not so much of racial antipathy, as of that arrant French militarism exemplified in the person of one of his accusers on the second trial, an officer who declared on the witness stand that he would instantly shoot his own mother if so ordered by his commanding officer. And possibly Dreyfus more than suspected that there was close connection between the military clique and the financial clique in control of the French Government. It is certain that very powerful influences in French Jewry might well have exerted themselves more effectively in his behalf before he was doomed to Devil's Island and its inferno.

The endeavor to make a "Dreyfus" of Rosenbluth is decidedly suspicious. It is an appeal to passions and blind prejudices that should have no least part in the public consideration of the question of the accused man's guilt or innocence. That should be left confidently to the orderly processes of the law of the land. An attempt to paint Rosenbluth as a martyr to race feeling at this time can have no other object than deliberately and malignantly to manufacture in this country just such an "anti-Semitic movement" as is utterly alien to every American tradition and sentiment.

At the time of Major Cronkhite's death, of which Captain Rosenbluth and Sergeant Roland P. Pothier were the only witnesses, it was generally accepted that he had killed himself either deliberately or accidentally. The three men were on a hike in the woods near Tacoma. At the inquest, Captain Rosenbluth testified that the major had been shooting at a target with his revolver and was holding the weapon negligently near his head as if to bring it down for another shot when it was discharged. Cronkhite was "double-jointed at the wrist," Rosenbluth now explains, "and the muzzle of the gun being pointed downward, accounts for the entrance of the bullet at the base of the neck."

Some doubt seems to have arisen as to the possibility of the wound having been self-inflicted and an investigation was quietly pursued. Recently Pothier was arrested and is alleged to have made a confession implicating Rosenbluth. Both are at liberty on heavy bail pending trial. The present attempt to take the case out of court and try it in the newspapers and in Federal "investigations" may not be without significance.

Whisky Not a Medicine

THE recent declaration of the National Medical Association that whisky has no therapeutic value finds strong support in the fact, brought to light through a recent canvass of the 152,627 physicians in the United States, that only 33,379 or 22 per cent of their number hold permits to prescribe whisky for medicinal purposes.

In 24 states, druggists cannot fill such prescriptions and physicians are not allowed to prescribe alcoholic liquors as medicine. There are 40,000 physicians in these states, and in many of them pure grain or ethyl alcohol is found to be a satisfactory substitute for whisky or brandy as a solvent or preservative.

All of which would indicate that there is nothing very drastic in the Volstead Act's limitation of the physician's right to prescribe whisky for medicinal purposes to not more than one pint for one patient in any ten days.